

# A Culture of Caring & Excellence

The Bloomington Project School is Making it Happen!



**WE ARE** a teacher-designed chartered public school that opened in 2009. TPS came to be as a result of a small group of passionate IN public school educators. The group articulated its vision for a school where students would thrive as whole individuals, while achieving academic excellence. TPS was born of our collective dream to create a school grounded in core beliefs & values, located in the heart Bloomington, to benefit the entire community.

**OUR STUDENTS & FAMILIES** There are 275 students enrolled K-8, (waiting list of 300+) who come from Monroe County & surrounding areas. 35% of students are eligible for free/reduced lunch and 24% have IEPs. Our families are committed to the development of every student's heart, mind, and voice.

**OUR TEACHERS** empower student-family hearts, minds, & voices; create learning experiences that are relevant in inclusive classrooms; value the contributions of all members of the learning community; judge our success based on the success of all students, especially those with the highest needs; celebrate & honor all our students, families, staff & their diverse backgrounds; trusting students, families, & staff to be both learners & teachers.

**OUR PROMISING PRACTICE** At TPS, much of the development of the school culture and climate is based on work from [The Responsive Classrooms](#) (RC). RC is an approach to teaching and learning that fosters safe, challenging, and joyful classrooms and schools. Developed by classroom teachers, it consists of practical strategies for bringing together social and academic learning throughout the school day. The Responsive Classroom approach helps create learning environments where children thrive socially, academically and emotionally. The guiding principles include: The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum. How children learn is as important as what they learn. Process and content go hand in hand. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction. To be successful academically and socially, children need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. Knowing the children we teach-individually, culturally, and developmentally is as important as knowing the content we teach. Knowing the families of the children we teach and working with them as partners is essential to children's education. How the adults at school work together is as important as their individual competence. Lasting change begins with the adult community.

As a result of this work, as well as many other curricular components, TPS ranked in the top 2% of academic growth amongst Indiana schools between 2009-2014. TPS also received a 2013, 2014, and 2015 "A" designation from the Indiana Department of Education.

**OUR STEPS** On-going, job-embedded professional development ensures that there is fidelity to the model that we have developed for TPS. We stand on the shoulders of greatness from Responsive Classroom, Teaching Tolerance, Ashoka and many others who have influenced our thinking, our practice, our procedures and our policies.

## IN OUR STUDENTS' WORDS

*"TPS is a place where I have a voice and can be a leader, even though I am a kid. At TPS, I am noticed."*

*"TPS teachers show that they care about each and every one of their students." "We live in a big family at TPS and that is an amazing thing! This makes you unlock your full potential." "TPS has been my heart and soul of education and friendship. It has assisted me greatly in social education and how to treat others." "TPS is important because of the amazing community we have developed, which makes me feel amazing on the inside." "I have had a good amount of epic fun at TPS."*

For more information about our school or corporation, email: [connect@theprojectschool.org](mailto:connect@theprojectschool.org) or visit our website: [www.theprojectschool.org](http://www.theprojectschool.org)